TREE PROBLEM

ACT 1

* Finn and Jake return to their tree house home, bruised and battle-weary after another day of quality Adventure Time. Finn hops into his sleeping bag and passes out instantly. Jake, on the other hand, commences his usual bedtime ritual, which includes a jowl steam with hot towels, some gentle stretching, and being lulled to sleep by the soothing and often melodic sounds that emanate somewhere deep within the trunk that supports their tree house. (Jake's exceptional dog-hearing is sensitive to the noise. He has always imagined the source of the sound to be merely.. just the wind.)

* Unfortunately, before the trunk's sounds can carry Jake off to dreamland, it abruptly stops. Jake tries to fall asleep without the sound, but just can't seem to do it. He <u>needs</u> his strange tree lullaby! Jake stretches his ears wide and picks up a mob of panicky cries emitting from the tree trunk! He sets out to see what wrongdoing lies inside the belly of his fort; But not before rousing Finn, who eagerly agrees to help Jake, not only for the promise of a new adventure but also because he knows when Jake doesn't get enough shut-eye ... *he goes CRAZY!!!*

* Finn and Jake slide down to the base of the tree and peer into a crack in the trunk. Jake shrinks down to about the size of a tomato and hurries inside. Unfortunately, Finn doesn't share Jake's shrinking abilities, and is only able to get his head and one arm inside the trunk before getting stuck. But the adventure must go on – so Finn attaches a miniature mask of himself to his wrist, and a tiny sword to his pinky, and sends his arm out to venture where the rest of him cannot.

ACT II

* Jake and Hand-Finn enter a tiny, woodland metropolis. Finn is in awe. The well-organized city, with beautiful clean apartment buildings lining the streets, is evidence that a cultured and peaceful society has thrived inside this hollowed out trunk for generations. But these streets are completely deserted and shadowy figures peer at them from the windows. A pall of dread hangs heavy over this city. Jake navigates the streets with easy familiarity. "Jake ... it seems like you've been here before." He has. "Just part of the secret life of dogs, I guess."

* A Dew-Drop sprite appears in a shadowy doorway and motions Jake and Hand-Finn. They are quickly led into the living room of the Sprite Choir's Conductor, leader of the Dew-Drop Headed Sprites. Normally, they would all be reveling in the streets, singing their sweet song. They must be the source of Jake's

lullaby. The Conductor proceeds to tell them some horrific news – that a mysterious, fearsome creature has been kidnapping members of the choir! At first, it was manageable, but tonight the creature got Roger, their finest tenor. Jake is crestfallen, as Roger had the voice of an angel. The conductor begins to sing a sad song when suddenly…

* CRASHH! A root like tendril flies through the window. Before Jake and Hand-Finn have a chance to react, the tendril drags the conductor out into the darkness. The fate of the Dew-Drops is now clearly in Jake's paws and Finn's hand, and they vow to rescue the captured choir singers. If they fail, a terrible fate will most certainly befall the Dew-Drops. And Jake will never have a good night's sleep again.

* Meanwhile, outside the trunk, a few curious forest animals have taken an interest in Finn's hindquarters, which are sticking out of the bottom of the tree. Some grass-folk have gathered as well to gawk at the odd sight. Finn feels obligated to be a good host, and does his best to entertain his guests and serve hors d'oeuvres with his feet and backside.

* Back inside the tree trunk, a sleep-deprived Jake is becoming increasingly grumpy and erratic. He won't even give Hand-Finn any of their patented, secret best-friend hand-slam. In fact, Jake is so overcome by grouchiness that he absent-mindedly leads them right into the MYSTERIOUS MONSTER'S LAIR, where they find a hideous mass of roots and plant matter viciously sucking the dew drops off the kidnapped Dew-Drop Sprite's heads. SLURP-SLURP-SLURP! The life is sucked right out of the Sprites and they collapse into a pile of dehydrated skin. What horror!

* Our heroes leap into action and charge the thirsty brute. Jake's canine attack moves are wobbly due to sleep-deprivation, but Hand-Finn more than makes up for it with his surprisingly dexterous and damaging digits. The Root Beast begins to retreat, but unfortunately, manages to move just beyond Hand-Finn's reach. Hand-Finn stretches and lunges desperately, but there's just no more slack on full-bodied-Finn's arm. Realizing his luck, the monster swipes up a few more Sprites and heads off. A heavy-lidded, ineffectively flailing Jake chases after him, rushing into certain doom. Hand-Finn cries out, "NO! STOP!" as we cut back outside the tree to reveal that the cries actually belong to full-bodied Finn, who's imploring the deer licking his foot to cease immediately.

ACT III

* Back inside the Monster's Lair, Jake struggles alone against the wild, slurping Root Beast. Sadly, his sleepy reflexes do little to assist him, and he receives quite the thrashing. The monster moves in to finish Jake once and for all, when suddenly…

* CHOP! A gigantic axe blade swings through the lair, cleaving the roof clean off. Light pours in from above as the Root Beast and Jake look up to see a full sized, axe-wielding Finn smiling heroically. Our resourceful lad chopped the tree right in half! Not only a bold move, but an insightful one, as it reveals that while the Root Monster might be a towering foe for inch-high Tree Sprites, it's a pretty puny one for an average-sized human boy. Jake picks right up on this, un-shrinks himself, and proceeds to stomp the Root Beast like a barrel of grapes. Water and dew spews out of the tendrils, re-constituting the dehydrated Sprites right back to form. HURRAY!

* Finn and Jake celebrate their victory, but the moment is soured when the now dried out plant monster uses his last dying breath to explain that the only reason he sucked the life out of those Sprites was because their incessant singing was keeping him awake all night. An exhausted, puffy-eyed Jake realizes the tragic irony and sheds a tear for and on his departed brother in insomnia. As luck would have it, the moisture in Jake's tear falls upon the monster and brings it right back to life! The sleepless duo embrace and sob…

* As dawn rises, Finn and the Dew-Drops hold an old fashioned tree-house/tree raising party to rebuild their respective homes. The forest creatures and grass-folk all lend a hand, working and dancing the night away to

the choir stylings of the Dew-Drops. Jake is passed out cold on the ground in his long johns, an ear-muff wearing Root Beast snoozing away by his side.

THE END

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Network notes Oct 28, 08

Tree Problem

Love Hand-Finn and the cutaways to Finn outside with his head stuck in the tree. Our only concern on this one is a need for a deeper character motivation for Finn and/or Jake beyond Jake being sleep deprived and Finn wanting to help him because he knows that a sleep deprived Jake gets crazy. If the drive is making sure that Jake doesn't get crazy, can we see more moments that hint on just how this aspect of him changes his behavior? Can it also be tied in to Finn helping him, as he does something when he's crazy that embarrasses Finn or really freaks him out. Anything that would help push this deeper, from a character standpoint, beyond an insomnia problem.